AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A <u>computer implemented</u> method to facilitate merging different versions of a database object, comprising:

receiving metadata associated with a first version of the database object and a second version of the database ~~object~~<u>object, wherein the metadata provides</u> <u>a data structure that describes the database objects and is distinct from the</u> <u>database objects themselves</u>;

comparing metadata associated with the first version of the database object with metadata associated with the second version of the database object to create a difference report;

creating an action plan from the difference report that specifies how to merge metadata associated with the first version of the database object with metadata associated with the second version of the database object, wherein creating the action plan from the difference report involves allowing a user to select which actions to take in merging metadata in order to produce merged metadata with desired properties and attributes; and

using the action plan to facilitate merging the metadata associated with the first version of the database object with the metadata associated with the second version of the object.

1   2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein metadata associated with the
2   first version and the second version of the database object are represented in
3   Unified Modeling Language.

1   3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein comparing metadata
2   associated with the first version and second version of the database object
3   involves customizing which associations to compare.

1   4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein comparing metadata
2   associated with the first version and second version of the database object
3   involves customizing how to compare the first metadata and the second metadata.

1   5 (Canceled).

1   6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein creating the
2   action plan involves examining the difference report to determine what actions to
3   take in bringing metadata associated with the first version and second versions of
4   the database object into agreement.

1   7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein metadata
2   associated with first and second versions of the metadata object can define
3   database objects, wherein database objects include tables, columns, dimensions,
4   cube, views, materialized views, and external tables.

1   8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the action plan can specify a
2   number of actions including creating, updating, and deleting database objects, and
3   their properties.

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1   9. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing
2   instructions that when executed by a computer cause the computer to perform a
3   method to facilitate merging different versions of a database object, the method
4   comprising:
5   receiving metadata associated with a first version of the database object
6   and a second version of the database ~~object~~object, wherein the metadata provides
7   a data structure that describes the database objects and is distinct from the
8   database objects themselves;
9   comparing metadata associated with the first version of the database object
10   with metadata associated with the second version of the database object to create a
11   difference report;
12   creating an action plan from the difference report that specifies how to
13   merge metadata associated with the first version of the database object with
14   metadata associated with the second version of the database object, wherein
15   creating the action plan from the difference report involves allowing a user to
16   select which actions to take in merging metadata in order to produce merged
17   metadata with desired properties and attributes; and
18   using the action plan to facilitate merging the metadata associated with the
19   first version of the database object with the metadata associated with the second
20   version of the object.

1   10. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 9, wherein
2   metadata associated with the first version and the second version of the database
3   object are represented in Unified Modeling Language.

1   11. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 9, wherein
2   comparing metadata associated with the first version and second version of the
3   database object involves customizing which associations to compare.

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1   12. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 9, wherein

2   comparing metadata associated with the first version and second version of the

3   database object involves customizing how to compare the first metadata and the

4   second metadata.

1   13 (Canceled).

1   14. (Previously presented) The computer-readable storage medium of

2   claim 9, wherein creating the action plan involves examining the difference report

3   to determine what actions to take in bringing metadata associated with the first

4   version and second versions of the database object into agreement.

1   15. (Previously presented) The computer-readable storage medium of

2   claim 9, wherein metadata associated with first and second versions of the

3   metadata object can define database objects, wherein database objects include

4   tables, columns, views, dimensions, and cubes.

1   16. (Original) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 9, wherein

2   the action plan can specify a number of actions including creating, updating, and

3   deleting database objects and their properties.

1   17. (Currently amended) An apparatus to facilitate merging different

2   versions of a database object, comprising:

3   a receiving mechanism configured to receive metadata associated with a

4   first version of the database object and a second version of the database

5   ~~object~~object, wherein the metadata provides a data structure that describes the

6   database objects and is distinct from the database objects themselves;

7   a comparing mechanism configured to compare metadata associated with

8 the first version of the database object with metadata associated with the second

9 version of the database object to create a difference report;

10   a creating mechanism configured to create an action plan from the

11 difference report that specifies how to merge metadata associated with the first

12 version of the database object with metadata associated with the second version of

13 the database object, wherein creating the action plan from the difference report

14 involves allowing a user to select which actions to take in merging metadata in

15 order to produce merged metadata with desired properties and attributes; and

16   a merging mechanism configured to use the action plan to facilitate

17 merging the metadata associated with the first version of the database object with

18 the metadata associated with the second version of the object.

1   18. (Original) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein metadata associated

2 with the first version and the second version of the database object are represented

3 in Unified Modeling Language.

1   19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein comparing metadata

2 associated with the first version and second version of the database object

3 involves customizing which associations to compare.

1   20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein comparing metadata

2 associated with the first version and second version of the database object

3 involves customizing how to compare the first metadata and the second metadata.

1   21. (Canceled).

1   22. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein creating the
2   action plan involves examining the difference report to determine what actions to
3   take in bringing metadata associated with the first version and second versions of
4   the database object into agreement.

1   23. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein metadata
2   associated with first and second versions of the metadata object can define tables,
3   columns, properties of tables, and properties of columns.

1   24. (Original) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the action plan can
2   specify a number of actions including creating, updating, and deleting tables,
3   columns, or properties.